

JRTC and Fort Polk COVID-19 FAQ

Commissary/Shopping

1. **Are any considerations being made for retirees with underlying health conditions when it comes to the commissary? Can a family member who does not have an ID card purchase their groceries for them at the commissary? I can provide his (my fathers) military ID along a written, signed statement from him.**
 - a. The ID card holder or their authorized agent must be present at the commissary. An authorized agent does not have to be an authorized commissary shopper; however, only the Installation Commander can authorize agent privileges. In that regard, we recommend you contact the Directorate of Family, Morale, Welfare, and Recreation at 337-531-7421 to request permission to be established as an authorized agent to shop on your father's behalf. You will need to provide documentation to prove the need for access, such as a letter from your father's doctor that states that he is unable to shop for himself (ie due to extreme hardship cases or when no adult dependent member is capable of shopping due to injury, illness, incapacitation). Once documentation is verified, you will receive a memo which will allow you as an authorized agent to shop on your father's behalf.
2. **Are there plans to limit the number of customers allowed in the commissary at a time? Walmart in DeRidder has a limit of 260 patrons at a time.**
 - a. The Commanding General, Garrison Commander, and Law Enforcement personnel are monitoring the commissary and conducting regular patrols of the area to ensure precautionary procedures and purchase limitations on products are complied with in order for DeCA to meet the increased. At the present time, no other measures are necessary. We ask that families limit the number of people who go inside, as this reduces your risk to exposure, and reduces the crowd inside the facility; however, we are aware that there are instances when that is not feasible.
3. **Has there been any discussion about bringing Click2Go Commissary shopping to Fort Polk? This service would be huge for us and really help cut back the amount of people traveling to the Commissary**
 - a. Click2Go has been requested as one of Fort Polk's Quality of Life initiatives. Unfortunately, at this time it is not available at Fort Polk; however, we are continuing to pursue Click2Go and hope to have it here in the future.
4. **What are we doing to keep Soldiers and their Families safe at Walmart? I have been there 2 times in the 2-3 past weeks and have witnessed multiple military families with Soldier in uniform and children in strollers with the wife in tow perusing the toy section. I am a front line health care worker. This is unacceptable.**

- a. Soldiers and their Families are still allowed to shop in the local area for mission essential items as the base is not on a lock down status. However, it is encouraged that families limit the number of people who go inside, as this reduces you and your family's risk to exposure.

HEALTH

5. Do we have a Professional Sanitizing and Disinfecting Team on Fort Polk?

- a. Every Unit has a Team Clean and a Team Trace. These Teams are assigned to assist with any area that has been exposed to a positive COVID individual within any of the Fort Polk facilities. Team Clean will ensure the area is cleaned to CDC standards.

6. Can you provide some guidance on masks? Have read that regular fabric mask does not protect as much. Is there a recommended filter or addition that would reduce virus spread through mask? Will this be enforced at the commissary? What needs to be done to protect them and their families?

- a. IAW DoD Guidance, effective 08 April 2020 all individuals on DoD installations will wear cloth face coverings when they cannot maintain six (6) feet of social distance in public areas or work centers (this does not include in an individual's or Family member's personal residence on a military installation). The cloth mask is to prevent the spread of the virus. If you are not providing medical care you should be using a cloth mask to stop the spread. Remember, usage of a face cloth covering is not in lieu of social distancing, but is an additional measure. Cloth coverings from common materials are recommended. This can include, T-shirts or other clean cloths that can cover the nose and mouth. Medical personal protective equipment such as N95 masks are preserved for appropriate personnel. Effective Friday, April 10, all commissary customers and employees must wear a face covering when entering, working or shopping in any DeCA commissaries or facilities.

7. Is there specific guidance for CYS/CDC providers not to use masks at the centers? If a state/federal statement comes out indicating masks do indeed protect citizens, then why would there be direction to CYS/CDC providers to NOT use masks? The intent is to slow/stop the spread, protecting our children and the care providers of these children. Thoughts? Guidance?

- a. Guidance was issued on 3 APR 2020 that masks are recommended to be worn. All staff are allowed to wear mask.

8. Are guidelines as far as frequency of donations changing during this COVID19? I donated end of February, but want to donate again but it's too early if we go by regular guidelines.

- a. No, guidelines have not changed for blood donations during the COVID-19 crisis. As long as you have not been sick, we urge all healthy individuals to donate every 56 days

9. Could services like immunizations be moved out of BJACH and into another area?

- a. At this time the best place to conduct immunizations is in the Clinics. This is the best place for monitoring any adverse reactions or issues that an individual may have.

10. Anyway that we can look into some sort of drive thru immunizations for infants? Not looking forward to bringing my 4 month old into the hospital, but she needs them. Just an idea.

- a. Infant immunizations are typically tied to a well-child visit, and these visits for infants are very important to ensure any problems with growth or development are identified and addressed as soon as possible. Additionally, infants frequently get multiple vaccinations at the same time, and the clinic is the best place to monitor them for any potential adverse reactions.

11. When a patient gets a negative test result can there be a drive thru for the mandatory follow-up instead of exposing them to the hospital?

- a. If you had symptoms, were tested, and were subsequently placed into isolation then a face-to-face physical exam is required to ensure you are being cleared from isolation appropriately. The drive-through screening process was designed to reduce the risk to those in the hospital, but is not an appropriate location for the required, focused physical exam.

12. I have seen that hydroxychloroquine and azithromycin have become mainstreamed as ways to cure COVID-19. Do you agree with this? What is the status of BJACH's supply, and do we have enough on hand to support the population?

- a. While there has been a lot of media coverage about the potential benefits of treating COVID-19 patients with different medications, well-designed clinical trials looking at the safety and effectiveness of these drug regimens have not been completed. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) state on their website that chloroquine and hydroxychloroquine are currently under investigation, and that there are currently no data from randomized controlled trials to inform clinical guidance on use, dosing, or duration of these medications to prevent/treat SARS-CoV-2 infections. Additionally, these medications have not been approved by the FDA for routine treatment of COVID-19 patients. Therefore, while these may be part of future approved treatments, they are currently not recommended by the organizations we use to help guide safe clinical practice.

13. Will BJACH plus-up the amount of doctors to have elective surgery done once allowed to do so?

- a. We will have to review the backlog of surgical cases to determine the best strategy to address them in a timely manner. Increasing the surgical throughput of any hospital requires not only more surgeons, but also additional surgical team members, such as anesthesiologists, operating room nurses, etc. It also potentially increases the number of post-operative admissions to the hospital. This will all be considered when we come up with our final plan on how to address the backlog.

14. Are we testing our BJACH personnel? Asymptomatic carriers could be present.

- a. Yes we are testing BJACH personnel when appropriate.

15. Will we get the antibodies test for those who were not tested but may have had COVID before the testing started?

- a. The testing capability we are getting is a nucleic acid testing (looking for the presence of virus RNA), and not a serological testing (presence of antibodies to the virus).

16. Are we allowed to have a family member who we know isn't sick fly in for child birth?

- a. Only one person is allowed in the room for delivery. This individual must be screened to ensure that they have no symptoms of the virus. If the family member is flying in or traveling through a "Hotspot", they will be subject to the mandatory 14 day quarantine. Virtual participation is encouraged if possible.

17. If I am having a c-section will my husband still be allowed in the room?

- a. Yes, you will still be allowed to have one person accompany you during your child birth, as long as they are not sick.

18. What if you have a small child and you aren't able to get somebody to watch them during your appointment? Do you just cancel that appointment?

- a. It depends on what kind of appointment this is. This could be conducted virtually over the phone. Please contact your healthcare provider and let them know that you may not have child care.

Military/Civilian /Contractor Concerns

19. Are first line supervisors making checks on their Soldiers that live off post? My neighbors have been throwing party after party!!!

- a. Three points of Contact by Squad Leaders, Team Leaders or Company Commanders are made per day with each Soldier. These contacts are being made via FaceTime, email or telephone. Soldiers who live off base should out of integrity comply with the General Order as well by practicing social distancing both on and off of the installation.

20. What is going to be done to stop the large gatherings in the on post housing areas? House parties and parks are still very active in North Polk.

- a. North Fort currently has Family Residential housing and Buddy Program housing. The family members that are in housing understand that they are to be following the guidance in General Order #1. MP's are moving through the areas and will stop if they believe there is a large gathering in progress. They will then take appropriate action with the occupant of that residence.

21. Is the curfew for all personnel on the base or just those in the barracks?

- a. The curfew is currently for the barracks only.

22. If the curfew is post wide are you going to start closing the ACP's, except ACP 1 & 7, and the VCC at 10 PM?

- a. No, our current guidance is that our ACPs and VCC hours of operation will remain the same. If the HPCON level is increased there may be an adjustment.

23. The 50 mile rule for your contractors is in effect. What if their significant others lives beyond that area and visits them? Doesn't that pose a hazard as well?

- a. If the individual is traveling more than 50 miles and are traveling through a "hotspot" they must abide by the 14 day quarantine requirement. If they do not abide by the requirement, they risk being barred from the installation. If your significant other visits you, and they are sick or may have been exposed you should also self-quarantine for 14 days.

24. Is the Texas/Louisiana stateline still being screened? If crossing, is mandatory quarantine still in effect?

- a. If you are traveling into Texas you are required to quarantine for 14 days. However, if you must travel between Louisiana and Texas for official duty, a medical appointment, or your residence is in Texas, an exception to policy memo signed by the CG can be provided to you to provide to the state troopers.

25. Will the MPs stop visitors at the gate that do not have on the appropriate face covering or mask?

- a. No. The guidance is that face coverings are to be used when social distancing cannot be enforced or met.

26. What about contractors who travel more than 50 miles to post

- a. If you live outside of the 50 mile radius you can still report to work if directed.

27. A lot of us contractors have heard about a possible 50 percent reduction of forces due to the increasing numbers. Can you shed some light on the possibility of this happening?

- a. Each contract is unique. The employer would have to be contacted directly to answer your question.

28. In the event the stop movement extends, what is the plan on getting the families and individuals w/out HHG's forward to their next location. 60+ days without vital essentials effects quality of life drastically. What is the likelihood of getting the exception to policy approved?

- a. The Transportation Office is working closely with the JRTC and Fort Polk Staff to schedule all shipping based on Report Dates and will continue to synchronize efforts to ensure all PCS changes are processed expediently. Every exception to policy is reviewed independently, with careful consideration.

29. How long does it take to get approved for an exception to policy for a PCS due to a compassionate reassignment? We've been waiting for 2/3 weeks now and still no answer and we were supposed to PCS on March 17th

- a. It may take up to eight working days to get the approval from VCSA. JRTC and Fort Polk G1 is working with 519th MP BN S1 to provide continuous updates to SGT Watkins, and has provided an update to the Watkins' family on 6 APR 2020.

30. Do we have an end date to PCS and TDY holds? Is it still May 11 or has it been pushed out further yet?

- a. At this time travel is still halted. If you have any questions regarding your status, please contact your Chain of Command for updates.

31. What if we already had our movers scheduled for the beginning of June before the stop movement? Will our dates get pushed if the stop movement is not extended?

- a. Please contact your unit S1. Pending PCSs, to include compassionate reassignments, are handled on an individual case by case basis. If you do not know who the S1 is, visit the JRTC and Fort Polk webpage at https://home.army.mil/polk/application/files/2615/8448/7622/Contact_Roster_for_COVID-19_For_Leave_TDY_PCS_Schools_and_Closures_v....jpg. The S1s in conjunction with the G1 are compiling and prioritizing a list of all pending PCS moves.

Recreation

32. Is going fishing allowed or is that a no as well?

- a. There are no restrictions at this time regarding fishing. You should continue to travel no more than 50 miles, practice social distancing, washing your hands regularly and refrain from touching your face.

33. If we paid for the CYS baseball season, has it been canceled and if so will we be reimbursed for the season?

- a. As of now the season is postponed. Refunds/ credits will be provided if you choose to withdraw your child, or will no longer be at Fort Polk if the season resumes. Please contact Fort Polk Parent Central Services at 337-531-1955.

Employment/volunteer work/community support

34. Can Civilians that have access to post volunteer at BJACH/CDC's, etc. Of course with the proper safety measures. If so, where do we need to go to start assisting with areas that need help?

- a. Please contact the Fort Polk Red Cross office at FortPolk@RedCross.Org. They are coordinating with BJACH to see what is safe/ appropriate, and will work with you to safely provide those items to the hospital team. As additional opportunities are identified, Fort Polk will let the community know.

School/Child Care

35. For CYS - will any additional measures be placed to reduce/limit parents from entering buildings for drop off or pick up?

- a. Effective 08 April, curbside drop off and pick up will be implemented at the centers. Parents will park and remove children from their vehicle, staff will complete a name to face check and sign children in to the master roster. If you are a parent of an infant, you will be required to remove your baby from the carseat. During pick up, the parent will call the facility when you arrive and are parked. The staff will then bring the child to the

car, an ID check will occur to verify identity and the staff will do a name to face check before returning the child. Nursing mothers will still be allowed to enter the CDC to nurse your child. The baby will be brought to the front and given to the parent.

36. A question concerning the CDCs and reducing the risks/slowing the COVID-19 spread: if essential service members are alternating days at work, thus decreasing the need for every CDC to be open, have we considered collapsing some CDCs like other posts have? This will help slow the spread and decrease the risk to our kids, our providers, and families of our service members. Thank you.

- a. CYS has considered collapsing the centers as other posts and has a plan in place; if the need arises. As of now over 100 Families bring their children to five different facilities daily. Our thought process is that by reducing exposure to about 20 Families and 10 staff per center is a safer model compared to exposing over 100 Families plus 100 staff to each other in one facility. By reducing the number in a classroom; for example, four infants and one adult in a room verses nine children and two staff per room. Our current model fits the social distancing guidelines.